

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel Claims 1-23 without prejudice or disclaimer, and add the following new claims:

Claims 1-23 (Canceled)

24. (Original) An electrical contact to a region of a silicon-containing substrate comprising a substrate having an exposed region of a silicon-containing semiconductor material; and a first layer of Ni monosilicide, wherein said substrate and said first layer are separated by a Si-Ge interlayer.

25. (Newly added) The electrical contact of Claim 24 wherein said silicon-containing semiconductor material comprises single crystal Si, polycrystalline Si, SiGe, amorphous Si or a silicon-on-insulator (SOI).

26. (Newly added) The electrical contact of Claim 24 further comprising an oxide layer present near a surface of said substrate.

27. (Newly added) The electrical contact of Claim 26 wherein said oxide layer has a thickness of from about 0.1 to about 3.0 nm.

28. (Newly added) The electrical contact of Claim 24 wherein said substrate is doped.